

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 44-49 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-43 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and Claims 44-49 are added by the present amendment. New Claims 44-49 are deemed to be self-evident from the original disclosure including at page 32, lines 12-20 of the specification, Claims 5, 25, 26 and 29, and Figures 5 and 11, for example. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 30, 32, 34 and 36 were objected to; Claims 1, 9, 16 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Seaton, et al. (U.S. Patent 5,591,299, herein "Seaton") in view of Jensen et al. (U.S. Patent 5,555,195, herein "Jensen"); Claims 2, 10 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Seaton in view of Jensen, and further in view of Goder et al. (U.S. Patent 6,424,880, herein "Goder"); Claims 25, 28 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Seaton in view of Goder; and Claims 30, 32, 34, 36, 38 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Seaton in view of Bims et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0019965, now Patent 6,557,134, herein "Bims").

Initially, Applicants respectfully submit that the outstanding objections to Claims 30, 32, 34 and 36, and the outstanding art based rejections of Claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 16, 17, 22, 25, 28-30, 32, 34, 36, 38 and 40 are rendered moot in view of the cancellation of these claims.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 44-49 do not recite the objected feature "detection means" noted at page 2, fifth paragraph, of the Office Action of September 10, 2004. Accordingly, no further objection on this basis is anticipated.

In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that Seaton, Jensen, Goder and Bims, neither individually nor in any proper combination thereof, support a *prima facie* case of obviousness of the invention recited in base independent Claims 44 and 46. This is so because, even when combined, these references do not teach or suggest **all** the subject matter of these claims.

In a non-limiting example, as set forth in Claim 44, Figure 5 illustrates a substrate processing apparatus including, among other things, a control apparatus that includes a first controller 103, and a second controller that transmits a first signal including information necessary to grasp a process history of process units. The substrate processing apparatus also includes a hub connected to the first and second controllers, and an information storage section connected to the hub, wherein the information storage section reads the first signal from the hub, and stores the information necessary to grasp the process history of process units included in the first signal. Claim 46 includes similar features.

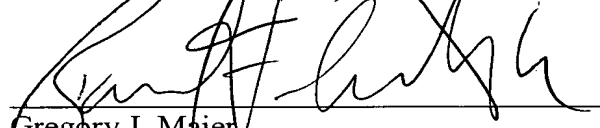
Goder describes a system for controlling a wafer processing chamber using two or more processors (see the abstract). To whatever extent signals could be stored in memory from these processors, there is no teaching or suggestion of an information storage section that reads a signal from a hub and stores information necessary to grasp a process history of process units included in the signal, wherein the signal is transmitted from a second controller. Thus, Goder fails to teach or suggest "... a hub connected to the first and second controllers ... an information storage section connected to the hub, the information storage section configured to read the first signal from the hub, and to store the information necessary to grasp the process history of the plurality of process units included in the first signal ..." as recited in Claim 44.

In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that none of Seaton, Jensen and Bims remedies this lack of any Goder teaching or suggestion of the claimed "hub," and the claimed "information storage section." Therefore, Seaton, Jensen, Goder and Bims, neither individually nor in any proper combination thereof, can be said to make obvious the invention recited in base independent Claims 44 and 46. In addition, Claims 45 and 47-49 should be allowed, among other reasons, as depending from one of base independent Claims 44 and 46, which should be allowed as just explained. For the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 44-49 are believed to be allowable over Seaton, Jensen, Goder and Bims.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion, and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/03)

Raymond F. Cardillo, Jr.
Registration No. 40,440

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